



VASHTI
AND
OTHER POEMS.

BY
KATE DOUGLAS RAMAGE,
LAKE MEGANTIC, QUEBEC.

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DEDICATION.

"I wrote everything for Mother," was the oft-repeated assertion of the fair young songstress, the "maker" of this book, the late Kate Douglas Ramage, daughter of Major J. D. Ramage, of Lake View, Lake Megantic.

That this admirable mother was worthy of the worship of such a daughter the following brief outline of her life, from the pages of the *Sherbrooke Examiner*, will better illustrate than words of mine :

"This amiable and accomplished lady, in the interests of her husband, abandoning the refining atmosphere and social attractions of her town home circle, located seventeen years ago in this then wild and almost unknown region,—the hardy islesmen of Lewis, an occasional trapper and fisherman, and the Indian, alone having penetrated it."

"To most in her condition the change would have been misery, but to her, with her intense love of nature and all the works of her Maker's hands, her extensive reading, and her love and exertions for the well-being and correct up-bringing of her young family, made it happiness. She revelled in the

works of nature, found 'Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything.' She communed with the minds of the great and mighty dead of former ages, and she determined and succeeded in throwing a halo of refinement in and around her forest home, that her children might not suffer by their transplanting. And in so doing she had to discharge many and various offices—the pastor, the school-teacher, the cook, and the gardener were added to those of mother. The regular family worship and read sermons were supplemented, when strolling in the woods gathering wild flowers, or along the lake shore examining pebbles, by leading the children from nature up to nature's God. Former studies had to be re-studied and reviewed, that correct instruction might be imparted. The many recipients of her courtly hospitality can, and do, speak of her table as a *chef d'œuvre* of forest cookery. The well-kept garden, and the house plants, healthy and blooming in every window, nook and cranny of the house, bear token of the work and attention lavished on them. No wonder that her family idolized her, and she idolized them in return, naturally proud that her culture had raised such fruit among the stumps.

"The assemblage at the funeral was the largest yet gathered together in this section, and the remarks of some that attended speak volumes as to the influence and worth of the departed: 'She is a public loss;' 'she will be sadly missed at the bed side of the

sick;' 'Yes, and where her presence could not reach, soft dainties made by her hand found their way to the sick bed;' 'Her influence and example were mighty for good.' Similar remarks then made might be recorded *ad infinitum*; but the close of all is: Mother Earth has received her daughter Helen, and the house of sorrow and the house of joy will alike miss the handsome form, the radiant smile, the low and gentle voice:

"A low and gentle voice—dear woman's chiefest charm—

An excellent thing it is! and ever lent

To truth and love and meekness; they who own
This gift, by the all-gracious Giver sent,

Even by quiet step and smiles are known;
By kind eyes that have wept, hearts that have
sorrowed,

By patience never tired, from their own trials
borrow'd."

"Sic itur ad astra."

Nine-tenths of the contents of this volume has already appeared in the public press; and they are now gathered together by the loving hand of one who highly prized the friendship of, and his communion with, both mother and daughter, as a Christmas souvenir of her who so loved Christmas.

Of "Kathleen"—an endearing name bestowed by a dear friend, a warm-hearted, accomplished Irish lady—the *Examiner* truly says:

"She was gifted, indeed, with the true spirit of poesy; but, as unfortunately sometimes happens with such, her earthly tenement was altogether unsuitable to the brightness and strength of the spirit that dwelt within it; and a time therefore came, and that too quickly, when, the one becoming stronger and clearer as the other decayed, the balance overturned, and she fled to a more suitable home with Him whose own she was. In the words of the last poem she contributed to those columns while here, her's was

"The crown of pure, fair womanhood,"

"And she has borne it with her to wear it on a brow undimmed by pain, in the midst of an angelic choir whose musical tongue is known to a few like her, even while here."

And a sister songstress thus wails her departure:

"It was early Thursday morning
That this message came to me,
'Kathleen Ramage has departed—
Passed away so quietly.'

And its meaning came but slowly,
I can scarce believe it yet—
Was she gone, our brave, sweet singer?
Had her sun so early set?

Glad and hopeful was she ever,
And we loved her more each day,
For our blessing seemed to brighten,
As she took her heavenward way.

Friend most true and firm and loyal :

All who knew her knew her worth,
Knew their life was brighter, better,
From her patient stay on earth.

Her web of life she has woven,

Wrought it rich with deeds of gold ;
And the silver threads of kindness
Broider every glist'ning fold.

And now amid celestial beauty,

With the friends who've gone before,
She beholds our grand Redeemer,
Sings His praises o'er and o'er."

In keeping with the known feelings
of

THE DEAD DAUGHTER,

This Book is now dedicated

to

THE DEAD MOTHER. .

WILL McMINN.

Sunny Side, Lake Megantic,
Christmas, 1883.

TO MY MOTHER.

I do not like the pictured face
Of thyself, thou has brought to me,
The artist has not caught the grace
Of motherhood that falls from thee.

If artist skill and brush were mine,
I'd paint thy glossy dark brown hair,
Where bands of silver softly shine,
Making thee in my eyes most fair.

I'd paint the lines wrought on thy brow
By years of care and love for me,
I'd paint, but e'en words fail me now,
The smile thou givest to all so free.

I'd paint the clear depths of thine eyes,
That change with every passing thought,
Now shining with a glad surprise,
And now with mirth or sorrow fraught.

I caviled at the pictured face,
But unto me it is most dear,
I'll give it on my walls a place,
'Twill speak to me when thou'rt not near.

MY MOTHER'S GARDEN.

Yes, I have a garden plot,
And in it some few trees and flowers,
On them I have bestowed much thought
And labored for them many hours.

Have they repaid my care and love ?
Well, friends, I cannot rightly say,
The Master Gardener above
Will tell me on some future day.

But this I know, but for my flowers,
My life would often have been drear,
They've cheered me in my lonely hours
And solaced me when trials were near.

* * * * *

See this is my young cedar tree,
Upright and stately as a king ;
Yet bending lovingly to me,
Shelter over me to fling.

Jack

Wintery storms may it assail,
But 'tis rooted firm and fast ;
It may bend, t'will never quail,
But rise triumphantly at last.

I had doves-eye, but on a day,
An Angel from the Lord above,
Through the blue sky cleft his swift way
And bore afar my pure-eyed dove.

Maggie

Here my fair sweet briar stands,
With lovely blossoms sprinkled o'er,
Stay, touch it not with careless hands,
'Twill fragrance shed, but wound you sore.

*Prall's
madam*

These are my pines from far Norway,
My fair young trees so straight and trim,
See how proudly they bend and sway,
They are sound in heart and strong in limb:

*Will's
Jim*

And here is my sweet little daffodil,
Nodding and dancing all the day,
Coaxing each zephyr that mounts the hill
To linger awhile and have a play.

Let's

There is my dark red velvet rose,
A vigorous bush, healthy and strong,
Thorniest plant in my garden that grows,
But fairest flowers will crown it ere long.

W. W. W.

This is the last, my wounded pansy,
With dark purple leaves and tear-stained heart,
'Tis not so fair, and yet I fancy
'Twould wound me deeply from it to part.

*And
Kate
herself*

It came to me in grey March weather,
When I was young and life was glad;
Since then long years we've passed together,
Sometimes happy and sometimes sad.

VASHTI.

Round her they clustered,
Maidens whose loveliness might e'en
Have set a poet's or an artist's brain
On fire ; red-lipped and dreamy-eyed,
They sang or worked or glided through
The mazy dance, or knelt before her,
Holding up, in cup of burnished gold,
The ruby blood crushed from the fragrant grape.
As Venus in the evening sky outshines
The lesser lights that sparkle there,
So she among her women sat,
A queen in form, in face, in mind,
Dimming their loveliness with her rare grace.
Vashti the Beautiful, a star, a queen,
Her slender neck proudly upheld her
Small round head, wreathed with
Its jetty coronal, and on her rounded cheek
The curling lashes laid, shading her
Wondrous eyes, half hiding, half revealing
The passion, purity and strength that dwelt therein ;
Her red lips, parted like a cleft pomegranate,
Showed the snowy line within ;
And her fair arm, laid on a cushion,
Rich with Tyrian dye, shamed
With its alabaster hue the dazzling
Whiteness of her silken robe.

Idly she sat swaying a scarlet blossom
To and fro with her lithe fingers.
"Vashti the Beautiful, a star, a queen,
Ahasuerus calls for thee, Oh Vashti,
Peerless among queens!"
('Twas Harbona, the chamberlain, that spoke.)
"The earth, the ocean, and the air have
Yielded up their choicest treasures
To grace Ahasuerus' feast;
The mine and loom have lent their aid,
And ruby wines have sparkled in their golden cups;
And now, Oh queen! he calls for thee,
Decked in thy costliest jewels, and in thy richest robe,
That all the nobles and the princes may
Gaze upon thy wondrous loveliness, and say,
She too is his."
Down dropped the flaming flower
Upon the marble pavement,
And the slender fingers interlaced
And held each other with a strength
That forced the blood back from the shell-like nails.
Proudly she looked upon him, and, drawing
Up her stately form to its full height,
Calmly she spoke: "I will not go,"
The crown Ahasuerus placed upon
My head is his, he can remove it,
The crown of pure fair womanhood
Is mine, and I will keep it, although
I lose the world and life beside.

* * * * *

Round her, her women clustered,
She waved them off, and stood alone,—
Vashti the beautiful, uncrowned,
But still a queen.

RUTH.

She stood among the corn, her dark eyes
Half covered with the creamy tinted lids,
Her long lashes half concealing the earnest
Fager looks that glowed within their depths,
The gleaming poppies on her breast not redder
Than her scarlet parted lips—
Her slender fingers filled with ripe full ears,
And he, the master of the field, seeing her,
Paused and asked "who art thou, daughter"?
Then she, raising the long-lashed lids,
Looked at him like a trusting child,
And told him who she was, and whence she came.
Then, said he, "Go not hence, my child,
To glean in other fields, but stay thou here in mine."
Gravely he spoke, but kindly, then, turning,
Left her knee-deep in corn and blood-red poppy
flowers.
But all the day the soft dark eyes
Seemed smiling into his:
And so she came and went, the dark-haired Ruth,
Unnoticed, unrebuked, but not unseen.

GARFIELD.

2nd Sam., iii. 38 : " There is a prince and great man fallen this day in Israel,"

19th September, 1881.

Died, but not on the battle-field,
Forced by the bayonet's point to yield,
Nor yet mown down by a bursting shell,
The dreadful cannon's roar his passing knell ;
Not so the martyred President met his fate,—
But shot, while ably guiding the Ship of State, ,
And at the helm.

A nation watched him with bated breath
As he lay for days twixt life and death ;
Alternate swayed by hopes or fears,
A people rejoiced or were bathed in tears,
And the faces of men with keen pain grew gray
When the Christian hero passed away,
Calmly at the last.

For weary months he bore the strain
Of a body racked by cruel pain,
But never against his murderer railed
Nor his noble courage never failed ;
A nation's chief, but the child of God,
Calmly he bowed beneath the rod,
Without a murmur.

The whole world watched his passing breath,
And mourned the martyred patriot's death ;
Statesmen and queens in sorrow bowed,
Women and strong men wept aloud ;
And the nation prayed that God would bless
And comfort the widow and fatherless
In their time of need.

* * * * *

Hush, make no loud groan o'er the honored dead,
As ye gather sadly around his head,
And gaze on the form from which life has fled,—
Hush, for he only sleepeth !
His name will live while the nations stand,
As a type of manhood, noble and grand ;
And every people in every land
Will reverence the name of Garfield.

DEATH OF THE SINGER.

(P. P. Bliss, the author of the hymn commencing " I know not the hour
when my Lord will come," was killed at the Ashtabula disaster.)

Swiftly the iron-horse speeds along
Through the dark and dreary night ;
Bearing behind a motly throng,
A living load of human freight.

Some were there with hoary hair
And brows with many a deep-worn seam,
And children like angels bright and fair,
And maidens with faces like a dream.

And one there was among the throng,
Who counted not his life his own,
He raised his voice in glorious song,
Sinners to lead to Jesus' throne.

" I know not when thou'lt come," he sang,
" Saviour to take me to thyself,"
And through the land that pæan rang,
In lowly cots and homes of wealth.

And many a heavy eye grew bright,
And many a trouble was forgot,
As the singer sang with pure delight,
Contented with his earthly lot.

Their hearts beat high with thoughts of home
And loved ones that they soon would meet ;
And many let their fancy roam,
And heard the Christmas greeting sweet.

Ah, me ! but never more did they
The cheerful fireside gather near,
For long before the break of day,
The bravest heart beat wild with fear.

For death was out that wintry night,
And he took them all for his prey,
The white-haired men and children bright
And the light-hearted maidens so gay.

And the singer's spirit passed away
To the land of perfect light and love,
And there he'll sing in endless day
Glory to Jesus Christ above !

YOUNG ESSEX, THE PONY RIDER.

AN INCIDENT IN REAL LIFE.

At MacPherson's Station, long ago,
On one of summer's sultriest days,
An anxious group, with heads bent low,
Listen to what a rider says :
" The Pawnee dogs are out," he cried,
" Their murderous bands are very near ;"
Then, slipping to his pony's side,
" They've marked me in the leg—see here."
No cowards were those Western men,
But each looked round from side to side
For some one that would there and then
For help to Kearney's fortress ride,—
To ride for help, though hostile braves
Beset the path at every step,
For help to save from cruel graves
All that were near and dear to them.
If Slade was here, old Johnstone said—
Slade and his good " hoss," old Black Ranger—
He would not stop for knives or lead
With women and their babes in danger.
" I'll go," and a bright-eyed boy stepped out,
" I'm not afraid to risk the chances."
" Good," said the old man looking about,
Noting the women's eager glances ;

"Pick your 'hoss' boy, and ride for your life,
Thirty-five helpless women and babes,
Think of it, boy! and Nellie's your wife
When you come back all sound and safe."
A farewell word, and the ride had begun;
Gallantly forward dashed the pony,
Heeding not the glare of the sun
Nor road so long and rough and stony.
Onward swept brave rider and horse,
And swiftly a station came in view,
But naught was there save a bloody corse
Lying under the sky so blue.
On, still on, he meets the stage,—
Driver and horses, all are gone!
On the Indians have wrecked their rage,
And left the inmates dead as a stone.
One horrified look, and on they speed,—
Mile after mile is left behind;
Wearied now is the good little steed,
And his rider with dust is almost blind.
And now he hears triumphant cries,
And knows the Indians are on his track:
He dashes the dust from his burning eyes,
With never a thought of turning back.
Speed, little horse, your work's near done,—
Onward, young Essex, the fort is in sight;
But, ah! there gleams in the shining sun,
A shining arrow, swift and bright.

For an instant the rider reels,
Then raises on high his goodly lash,
And, as the pony the sharp pain feels,
Inside the walls of the fort they dash.
Both horse and rider are lying low ;
Wildly young Essex looks about :
" Pawnees," he gasps ; " MacPherson's station
cleaned out—
Send help to them, quick ! for God's sake, go ! "
His head sunk low on the green sward sweet.
" My love to Nellie Johnstone," he sighed,
And both brave hearts had ceased to beat :
Horse and rider together had died.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"Our Father who art in Heaven,"
Not there alone but here ;
We thank Thee for the light Thou'st given
To guide us to Thy throne most dear.

"Ever hallowed be Thy name,"
By men below and saints above,
For His dear sake on earth that came,
An emblem of Thy perfect love.

"Thy Kingdom come," oh, Lord, we pray
That Thou wilt haste that happy time,
When earth shall feel Thy blessed sway,
And own Thee Lord o'er every clime.

"Thy will be done," not ours, oh God,
E'en on this earth as 'tis in Heaven ;
Help us to bow beneath Thy rod
Or thank Thee for Thy mercy given.

"Give us this day our daily bread,"
That we may faint not by the way ;
Till by Thy kind hand safely led
We enter into perfect day.

"Into temptation lead us not,
From all evil us deliver,"
E'en that if lonely be our lot,
We may dwell with Thee forever.

"Thine is the Kingdom, Lord, we know ;
The power and glory too, are Thine,"
In mercy look on us below,
Help us to love Thy Name divine.

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

Hark, the Christmas bells are ringing
Out upon the winter air,
And happy voices singing,
Merry Christmas, it is here.

Grandfather hears it with a sigh,
As he sits in his big arm-chair,
And thinks of the days, long gone bye;
As "Merrie Christmas" falls on his ear.

The Christmas most bright in his life
Tenderly comes to him now,
When he wooed and won his dear wife,
All under the mistletoe bough.

"Merrie Christmas," the children cry,
Rushing from chamber to hall,
With light hearts and bright glancing eyes,
Merrie, Merrie, Christmas to all.

"Merrie Christmas," the mother says,
As she kisses her darling's brow.
One was with her in past Christmas days,
That sings with the angel band now.

"Merrie Christmas," the maiden hears
As her true love her soft hand takes,
And she longs for the coming years,
Merry Christmases for him to make.

In cottage, in street, and in hall,
That greeting rings merrily out,
And joy seems to hang over all
As "Merrie Christmas" rings about.

Christmas should be a time of joy,
But, ah! do not let us forget—
There is many a girl and boy
Who have ne'er had a happy one yet.

Then strive, dear little ones all!
To make some poor child's life more bright,
Then, in cottage and street and in hall,
Enjoy Christmas with all your might.

Merrily ring the Christmas bells,
Angel voices fall on our ear,
Peace on earth, to men good will,
Merry Christmas it is here.

"Merrie, Merrie Christmas to all,"
In cottage, in street and in hall;—
"Merrie, Merrie Christmas to all."

BABY IS DEAD.

Lone is the house, and sad and still ;
Loud sounds the hum of the busy mill,
The old clock ticking on the stairs
Falls sadly on our troubled ears,—
 Baby is dead.

In darkened room the mother sleeps,
Or worn with watching, wakes and weeps,
And sees the sunlight on the flowers
Or sadly notes the passing hours,—
 Baby is dead.

Oh ! who can tell the grief she feels
As by the little form she kneels,
And looks upon the death-glazed eyes,
Once clear and blue as summer skies,
 Of baby dead.

She thinks of the many dreams she had
Of that baby boy, a handsome lad,
And how the coming years she'd span,
And see a noble loving man,
 That baby dead !

She tries to say that it is best ;
Her darling is, she knows, at rest,
And, safe within the Saviour's band,
Will wait her in the golden land.
 Her baby dead.

IN AFTER YEARS.

Yes, I have children, strong and fair ;
They gather at evening round my chair,
And, laying their little heads on my breast,
Talk of the brother that's gone to rest.

I love my girls with their laughing eyes,
And dear to me are my sturdy boys ;
But I cannot forget how my poor heart bled
When my first-born darling lay cold and dead.

He left my side full of childish mirth,
As fair a boy as was on God's earth,
And in one short hour the little head
Laid on my bosom, cold and dead.

One careless step, and the cruel river
Had quenched the light in his eyes forever ;
Forever had hushed the merry voice
That had always made my heart rejoice.

Nerveless the fingers fell from my grasp,
That had always met in a loving clasp ;
Cold he lay, like a beautiful flower
Cut down by the Frost King in his power.

Dear are the little ones to me
That gather at twilight round my knee,
But as I stroke each shining head
I think of the little lad that is dead.

Sometimes in dreams I see his eyes
Bent on me with looks both arch and wise,
Or in my other boys I trace
A likeness to my darling's face.

But time will heal the stubborn pain,
And God, who maketh all things plain,
Will give me back the child I love
In the beautiful land of light and love.

was situated in the midst of an orchard, and the boughs, loaded with blossoms, clustered round the window, through which I had a view of the Grand River Ottawa, rolling majestically, and glittering in the sun. In the midst of the river was the island of Perrot, so luxuriantly wooded, that the foliage of the trees descended to the surface of the water, and completely concealed the bank on which they grew. Numerous birds fluttered in the sunshine, sometimes plunging into the bosom of the forest, sometimes issuing from its recesses to revel upon the surface of the water; and the king-fisher, with orient plumage, would often spring out of the thick copse, like a fragment of the rainbow darting from behind a dark cloud. All was glorious, animated, and beautiful:

It is necessary to cross the Ottawa here, and the intervention of the island of Perrot occasions a double ferry, and, as it were, divides the river into two branches. We crossed the first branch, which is about a quarter of a mile broad, on a raft. I then resumed my seat in the calash, and we drove along an excellent road, and were soon completely embowered in the forest. My situation was new and interesting in the highest degree, for I had never before experienced the sublimity of a *real* forest, nor witnessed a succession of trees of such magnitude and beauty. Im-

O'er her all the winds are sighing,
Sobbing loudly round her head,—
Sad indeed to see her lying,
Faint and weak and almost dead.

All the little brooks are weeping
O'er this lovely, prostrate friend ;
Ah, they say, when she is sleeping,
All our joys will have an end.

The leaves are gently on her falling,
Hiding her from sight away ;
The birds are to each other calling—
Alas, dear Autumn dies to-day.

WHAT IS PATIENCE?

(A little Scotch lassie being asked, "What is Patience?" replied, "To bide a wee and no wearie.")

"What is patience, little lassie?
Can you answer that for me?"
Looking up, my blue-eyed Jessie
Wonderingly gazed at me.

"What is patience, dinna ye ken?
To bide a wee an' no wearie;
That's what my mither tauld me, when
I was sick and thocht it drearie."

You've answered well, my wee dearie,
I will recall your words each day,
And bide a wee and no wearie,
While moving on my lonely way.

Bonnie Jessie needs no more
To bide a wee an' no wearie;
Her sunny summer days are o'er,
And, without her, life is drearie.

ONLY A ROSEBUD.

Only a rosebud, withered and old,
But far more precious than the purest gold,
Given to me by a hand, long cold,
 In the dear old long ago.

The tenderest eyes looked into mine,
As we stood beneath the branching vine,
And soft white fingers round mine did twine
 On that night in the long ago.

Beautiful tender face, so fair,
Shaded by masses of dark brown hair,
Unlined by a single thought of care
 On that night so long ago.

Ah, love, you gave me a red, red rose,
Promising truth till life's dark close,
And now on your grave the green grass grows,
 And I mourn for the long ago.

Still in the churchyard green you lie,
And oft your quiet grave I pass by ;
Can you not hear, love, I am so nigh ?
 And I was so dear to you long ago.

This withered rosebud is all I've left ;
Sunshine and joy from my heart are reft,
Sorrow and pain form the warp and weft
 Of my life since you died, long ago.

CUTTING THE CLOVER.

Out on the knoll they're cutting the clover,
Laying the crimson heads so low,
Backwards and forwards, over and over,
Swinging the sharp scythes to and fro.

Out on the knoll they're steadily mowing,
Mowing the clover and plummy grass;
The shades of evening are deeper growing
As swiftly the hours of daylight pass.

With clover tops the baby is playing,
Small queen of the field she sits serene;
With busy fingers the flowers she's laying
On the ground so smooth and green.

An old-world strain, for the baby's delight,
One of the mowers is singing there,
About being still "the bravest knight,"
And wedding "the fairest fair."

Breath of roses and children's clear voices
Are carried past on the breeze;
Everything in nature rejoices,
Nodding flowers and whispering trees.

And I stand in the open door, and long
That life like this might last forever;
Like the burden of a calm, sweet song
Or the gentle rippling of a river.

But soon in a distant land will be
My mower that sings of ladies fair;
And I'll long for the sound of his laugh so free,
Or his quick footstep on the stair.

TWILIGHT.

Laden with perfume comes the breeze
Through the loftily whispering trees,
Wooing me to rest at ease,
As evening falls.

Loudly now the night bird sings,
In the woods his clear note rings,
As, on swift untiring wings,
He speeds at close of day.

The swallow chirping in her nest
Covers her brood with downy breast,—
A mother's care she knows is best
As night comes on.

Afar off in the marshy brake
The toads discordant music make,
And all the slumbering echoes wake
As twilight falls.

The cows with ever tossing head
Along the road with measured tread
y pretty Bess are homeward led
As day departs.

Above the trees the silver moon
A radiance sheds like purest noon.
Chasing twilight away too soon,
And night is here.

so free,

AT NIGHT.

At night when the bairns are all asleep,
And the busy wee hands are still,
And naught is heard but the cricket's chirp,
Or a night-bird's cry on the hill,

Or the clock in the church tower tolling,
As it tells of the coming day,
Or the sound of the river rolling
Part the poplars over the way,—

Then, gliding gently from bed to bed,
A white-robed form may be seen
Bending over each childish head—
A beautiful sight, I ween !

Tenderly raising the golden hair
That falls o'er her darling's brow,
Whispering, "God keep thee in His care,
Ever as bright and pure as now."

Covering the restless, dimpled arm
Outside the counterpane thrown,
Saying, "Christ keep thee from all harm,
And mark my dear lamb for His ~~care~~ .

Kissing the dewy lips so sweet,
Gazing with all a mother's delight,
Tucking them up so snug and neat
Ere she bids them a last good-night.

And the children know the loving care,
And come back from the land of dreams,
No vision there is half so fair
As their mother's face ever seems.

A BIRTHDAY WISH.

(31st March, 1876.)

"May you look as well, and be as happy, ten years from now as you
are to day."

Ten years from now where shall we be
That gathered round the board to-day,
With laughter loud and happy glee
And thoughts of sorrow far away ?

Shall we be here, I fain would know,
A perfect and unbroken band,
When ten times on the earth the snow
Shall fall from winter's icy hand ?

When ten bright Junes have passed away,
Bearing their mead of sun and shower,
Will life then look to us so gay,
So quickly speed the passing hour ?

We may be here ten years from now
That gathered round the board to-day,
With gladness traced upon each brow,
And no loved member far away.

And that dear one whose presence makes
Sunshine and light and love for all,
On her may no rude storm-cloud break,
Or sorrows sharp and sudden fall.

PSALM XLVI, 4TH VERSE.

"There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God."

I have gazed on that river, that beautiful river,
For many long years I have stood on its shore ;
But the bright crystal stream flows onward forever,
And vainly I long for the time to pass o'er.

Dear ones go before me, dear ones that I love,
In gladness they pass o'er that fair-flowing stream,
In triumph they enter the regions above ;
And on the shore sadly still of them I dream.

But my lone life closes, my lone life closes,
My cares and my grief will soon lift from my breast,
And the air is sweet with the breath of the roses,
And their perfume like balm brings with it kind rest.

I see the fair city, the fair golden city ;
The songs of my dear ones they come to me now ;
The Saviour holds His hands to me in pity,
And the light of His glory falls on my brow.

Soon will I pass over, in joy will pass over ;
All trouble and sorrow now flee far away ;
With Jesus my Saviour I'll dwell there forever,
With Him in the City of God I shall stay.

CHRISTMAS, 1876.

The bells ring loud and clear to-day
And merry children, laughing, say,
"Let all sorrow flee away
On this joyous Christmas day."

Angels bending from above
Look down with eyes of tenderest love,
And peace, that happy white-winged dove,
Sing joy to all, this Christmas day.

Maidens, with their tresses fair
Floating on the wintry air
Say, without a thought of care,
"Christmas day again is here."

Bush and bough with snow are white,
And gemmed with sparkling rays of light,
Old winter's donned a garment light
On this happy Christmas day.

Robin Redbreast o'er the lea
Flings his notes in ceaseless glee;
Roguishly and loud pipes he
On this Christmas day.

Merriest day of all the year,
To old and young alike most dear,
Coming winter's chill to cheer,
With joy we greet thee.

SONG OF THE WINDS.

(In imitation of the "Song of the Grass," published in the *Toronto Globe*.)

Here I come blowing, blowing everywhere,
O'er the rippling lake,
Whistling through the marshy brake,
Sighing through the leafy trees,
Greeting now the busy bees,
I come blowing, blowing everywhere.

Here I come blowing, blowing everywhere,
Through God's acre, still and quiet,
Making an unseemingly riot,
Hovering o'er a shady dell,
Playing with the sweet blue-bell,
I come blowing, blowing everywhere.

Here I come blowing, blowing everywhere,
Whisp'ring in the country lane,
Whirling round the weather-vane,
Tearing through the city street,
Kissing all the girls I meet,
I come blowing, blowing everywhere.

Here I come blowing, blowing everywhere,
Joining now the young and gay
In their happy, happy play ;
Catching up an urchin's kite
To an eye bewild'ring height,
I come frisking, frolicking everywhere.

Here I come stealing, stealing everywhere,
Playing round the baby sweet,
Laying bare his dimpled feet ;
Whisp'ring in a maiden's ear,
Who listens for a footstep dear,
I come stealing, stealing everywhere.

Here I come shrieking, howling everywhere,
Catching up the mist and rain,
I dash it against your window pane ;
Filling the fisherman's white sail,
I make him shrink before the gale,
Here I come shrieking, howling everywhere.

Here I come blowing, blowing everywhere,
From the hollow of His hand,
God, who formed the sea and land,
Over lake and sea, and river,
Yet obedient to Him ever,
I come blowing, steadily blowing everywhere.

LAKE MEGANTIC IN FAIR WEATHER.

Calm and still as a sea of glass
Lies the beautiful lake,
While o'er the sky the gray clouds pass,
And quivering shadows make.

Far, far down in the waters deep
The tiny fish do float,
And on its surface seems to sleep
The green-leaf'd lily boat.

Th' eternal hills around the shore
Like giant warders stand,
And the tender light of eve falls lower,
Resting on lake and land.

Along the shore a wild duck floats,
Guarding her brood from harm,
A little child between two boats
Plays in the waters warm.

Out in the fair lake's shining heart
Two girls are in a boat,
Idly their oars they leave to rest
As they mock the loon's wild note.

The wood, reflected in the lake,
To the scene new beauty lends,
And not a ripple the shadows break
As slow the night descends.

LAKE MEGANTIC IN FOUL WEATHER.

Quiet and calm the lakelet lies,
Reflecting back the cloudy skies,
And far off in the mountains rise
 The muttering, mournful wind.

The sun shines out with livid glare,
Making all red the noonday air,
The fish-hawk scans with gloomy stare
 The surface of the lake.

And now the waves begin to lash
The sombre shore with ceaseless plash,
Higher and higher still they dash
 As nears the storm.

On the mountain tops a cloud
Is resting, like a sombre shroud,
And through the mist their summits proud
 Are dimly seen.

Each bird now seeks her wildwood nest,
To shield her young ones with her breast ;
Safe on each swinging bough they'll rest
 Through all the storm.

Far out from shore a sail boat rides,
Each chopping wave she swift divides,
And shoreward and homeward quickly glides
Before the storm.

.

And now on hill and dale and shore
The rain drops fall in steady pour,
And down the lake, with hissing roar,
The storm comes on.

GENTLY-FALLING RAIN.

Gently patters the falling rain,
Beating against my window-pane,—
Childish days it recalls again,
Gently-falling summer rain.

Memories of the past it brings;
Of pleasures gone the soft rain sings,
Of happy days and childish things,
Gently-falling summer rain.

The dear old red brick house I see
Where we children played so merrily,
Full of mirth and innocent glee,
In sunshine and in rain.

*Grandpa Savage
Love mine*

The old mill, with its turning wheel,
That watching made our heads to reel,
And the brook side where we used to kneel,
Where the water ran so rapidly.

Dearest of all I used to know
Comes Grandfather, with his head of snow
That Jesus gave him, He loved him so,
We little ones used to say.

*Grandpa
Savage*

Often he'd join in our childish mirth,
For of frolic there was no dearth,
As nuts were cracked around the hearth
By Grandfather, so generously.

Faithful husband, father, and friend !
But noble lives, alas ! must end ;
The good the Lord gives not, but lends,
And takes them to Himself again.

PEACE ON EARTH.

Long ago on Bethlehem's plains
Angels sang at night,
And shepherds heard the heavenly strains
With joy and pure delight.

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,"
Loudly the angels sang ;
"To men on earth great joy is given,"
Clearly their voices rang.

Long years since have passed away,
But o'er this world still,
That song is sung on Christmas day :
"Peace on earth, to men good-will."

The fair young mother o'er her child
Croons it in tenderest tone,
Unheeding the loud winds so wild
As through the trees they moan.

A maiden in the twilight hour
The soft sweet strains repeat,
Still thinking of her home of yore,
Where loved ones used to meet.

And so this world moves on, and still,
Go wander where you may,
"Peace on earth, to men good-will,"
You'll hear on Christmas day.

CHRISTMAS, 1879.

Through the frosty air
Far this message send,
To the winds with care :
Merrie Christmas, friend.

Each one for to-day,
Lay their burden down ;
Forgetting if they may,
Adversity's stern frown.

Let no taint of sorrow
For summer gone so long
Mar the gay to-morrow,
Christmas comes with song.

Summer winds have fled—
Sighed themselves away—
Christmas brings instead
Winds both fierce and gay.

Voices far and near
Repeat the joyful strain,
Let the bells ring clear,
Christmas comes again.

To friends in distant lands
This greeting bear for me :
I cannot clasp your hands
But you are dear to me.

In cottage and in hall
May mirth and gladness be,
For Christmas comes to all,
Of high and low degree.

OUR JIM.

Merry, roguish, frisky elf,
Full of mirth and joy and health,
Thinking little of himself,—
That's our Jim.

Trousers always full of holes,
Hands and face as black as coals,
Bragging of his fishing poles,—
That's our Jim.

Stepping on wee Blanche's toes,
Didn't mean to, Blanchie knows,
Always wearing out his clothes,—
That's our Jim.

Rushing up and down the stair,
Playing that he is a bear,
Pulling dollie's flaxen hair,—
That's our Jim.

Running now with Will a race,
Giving up a cherished place,
With a pretty childish grace,—
That's our Jim.

Pugnacious, too, and full of fight,
Sometimes wrong, but often right,
Quick, impulsive, eager, bright,—
That's our Jim.

Tender-hearted as a girl,
Yet always getting in a whirl,
Trying Pussy's tail to curl,—
That's our Jim.

Brown-eyed, red-lipped little Jim,
Happy boy, so lithe of limb,
May you always reverence Him,
That gives all good to our Jim.

BACHELOR JOHN.

Bachelor John in his arm-chair sits,
And over his brow a shadow flits,
While on his finger he slowly fits
A slender golden band.

Gently he turns it round and round,
Dreamily gazing on the ground,
And his thoughts go back with quick rebound
To the days of long ago.

A fair girl he, in fancy, sees,
Waiting for him beneath the trees,
While through her hair the evening breeze
Softly plays.

And in the quiet country lane
With her he holds sweet converse again ;
But the memory brings less joy than pain
For Bachelor John.

He minds how on her little hand,
As a pledge of love, he placed this band,
And told her in a foreign land
He would always think of her.

He remembers how the years slipped by
That he worked beneath an Indian sky ;
"When home I came," he says, with a sigh,
 "I found her dead."

"Dead in her grave in the lane," he says,
"And lonely since then have been my days.
"But life on earth cannot last always,
 And with me it is eventide."

Over the earth the sunset red
A beautiful rosy glow has spread,
And in his arm-chair, still and dead,
 Sits Bachelor John.

AUNT BELL.

"Lizzie, my dear, mind what you do!"
And Lizzie looked up in surprise;
But quickly dropped her eyes of blue
As she felt the hot blushes rise.

"I will tell you a tale," Aunt Bell said,
"A tale my Lizzie, both sad and true,
"And," with a nod of her handsome head,
"May it be a lesson to you.

"When I was a girl of seventeen,
I was gay as you, and as light of heart;
Ah, me! little then did I dream
I'd play, in life, such a dreary part.

"Lizzie, I loved, and was loved again,
My lover was a king among men;
'Tis the old tale, half joy, half pain,
A summer's happiness, and then—

"We quarrelled. Lizzie, I was to blame.
I bade him leave me; don't cry my child;
He turned in the door and his eyes said shame,
And the look in them almost made me wild.

"He sailed next day for a foreign land,
Leaving to me, his promised bride,
Only this circlet of gold on my hand,
And before the end of the year he died.

"I did not wish to speak of it again,
But to-day when you quarrelled with Hugh
I thought I would not mind the bitter pain
If it would prove a lesson to you."

Under the twisted old apple-tree
Stands Lizzie, and says with a look of shame
"Hugh, won't you make up friends with me,
I know that I was to blame."

BLANCHE'S BIRTHDAY DREAM.

"Twas on a night you'll all remember,
Eighteen seventy-eight, fifth of September,
A little girl laid her head so brown
Snugly on her pillow of down :
"To-morrow will be my birthday," she said,
Looking down in her snowy bed,
"I'll be up, I'm sure, before it's late,
For to-morrow you know I will be eight."
Now the fairies that night determined to keep
The little maid busy, though fast asleep,
So one seated himself astride of her nose,
And half-a-dozen tickled her toes,
They made her think her birthday had come,
And in dreamland led her afar from home.
They seated her on a mossy bank
And played before her many a prank,
Then, circling round, the little elves
Told her she must be one of themselves.
But the little girl shook her wise little head,
"Ah, fairies, I'm much too large," she said.
"No matter," the fairies then made answer,
"We know that you are a capital dancer,
So we'll trim you off till you're nice and small,
Although you are so frightfully tall ;
But, before we begin, the very least
We can do is to give you a birthday feast."

So the fairies set to work with a will
This capacious little human to fill.
They did not set out their mushroom table,
Because they knew to eat it she was able ;
But the Queen sent off ten for leaf of mullen,
Which made the little creature sullen ;
Fifty more went off, as smart as you please,
For an extra supply of fresh green cheese ;
Twenty more (and they were lovers)
Went to pick some four-leaved clovers
With a pearly drop in the middle so clear,
For the guest to wash down their very good cheer.
Some roasted grasshoppers' joints they had,
And some robins' tongues (which I think was too bad),
And then for desert they had " pizen " things,
Made from the flower on the millers' wings,
And honey drawn from a nasturtium cup
For the dainty little fairies to sup.
So, when the birthday feast was spread,
To the seat of honor their guest they led ;
But when they saw the cheese disappear,
Grasshoppers' legs and other good cheer,
Robins' tongues and millers' wing pies,
I tell you the good people opened their eyes.
" Oh, the greedy little mortal," they roared,
And on the grass their mountain dew poured,
Caught up their knives with faces grim,
And approached the little mortal to trim.
In swarms they attacked her ears and nose,
Shaved down her cheeks, and whittled her toes,

Filed off her teeth, and her fingers lopped,
Sowed up her mouth, and her brown hair cropped ;
While, shrieking and sobbing, the little maid
Entreated, and coaxed and begged and prayed
That they would kindly leave her alone
Before they had scrapped her down to the bone ;
But the fairies worked away with a will
Till, all at once, the Queen stood still :
" Ah, listen," she said " you fairies, all,
This mortal is certainly far too tall,
Her little finger, you plainly see,
Is certainly quite the length of me,
So I think we had better just leave her alone,
And let her find her way back home."
No sooner said than away they flew,
Leaving the poor little maid quite blue.
Then, from head to foot, she was shaken,
And a voice said " Awake ! Awaken !"
Slowly she opened her drowsy eyes,
And looked about her with great surprise,
" Why, mother," she said, " is it only to-day,
And did not the fairies take me away ?"
" What do you mean," the mother said,
Gently stroking her tangled head,
" This is my girlie's eighth birthday
And she must get up right away,
The boys have been waiting since the dawning
To greet you on your birthday morning."
The little maid shook her tangled head,—
" You don't know where I've been," she said.

HE LEADETH ME.

A little child, with folded hands,
Praying beside her mother's knee,
Half dreaming of the angel bands,
As she repeats, "He leadeth me."

A gentle girl, with thoughtful eyes,
Singing all day from care so free,
Yet looking ever to the skies,
Repeating still, "He leadeth me."

A happy bride, so fair of face,
Full of mirth and innocent glee,
Yet ever, with a childish grace,
Repeating still, "He leadeth me."

A mother proud, with love-lit smiles,
Now daisy-hunting o'er the lea,
Watching her baby's roguish wiles,
Repeating still, "He leadeth me."

A grandmother, with snow-white hair,
Beneath a shady maple tree
(A loving daughter's tenderest care),
Repeating still, "He leadeth me."

A green grave in a church-yard fair,
A loving heart from earth set free,
An angel's voice in upper air,
Repeating still, "He leadeth me."

CHRISTMAS, 1880.

Wreathe the walls with evergreen,
Making home so bright and gay ;
Make it like a fairy scene,
For to-morrow's Christmas day.

Loop it o'er the mirrors bright,
Where the sunbeams love to play ;
We must finish all to-night,
For to-morrow's Christmas day.

Twine it round the pictured face
Of our dear one passed away ;
Ah, me ! no more with girlish grace
Will she prepare for Christmas day.

But I'll not be sad to-night,—
Hence, dull thoughts, flee far away ;
Every heart must be so light
For to-morrow's Christmas day.

The children's eyes are very bright,
And, as they pass me, oft they say :
Oh, sister ! we're so glad to-night
For to-morrow's Christmas day.

Our pleasant task is at an end,
And, o'er the mountain far away,
The crimson and the gray shade blend,
Foretelling a fair Christmas day.

MY ROOM.

From morn till night-fall oft am I
On sufferer's couch compelled to lie,
Ah! weary then my hours would be
If naught of beauty I could see;
But, if my languid eyes I raise,
A lovely woman meets my gaze;
Within her arms a beauteous child
With eyes fixed on a wanderer mild,
Whose deep-set eyes and snow-white hair,
And forehead lined with many a care,
Bespeak him friendless and forlorn,
And tell of sorrows nobly borne.
In outstretched hand the child doth hold
A coin of silver or of gold:
Inscribed beneath this legend pure,
In letters clear, "Pity the Poor."
Or children's laughing eyes I meet
With pictured faces gay and sweet;
Or note how 'neath hot Indian skies
To lift the peg a lancer tries;
"Missed," and, anger in his face,
He dashes madly from the place,
But checks his steed in wild career,
As though to say, "I'm master here."

In shady corner next I glance
At plummy grass from "la belle France,"
I hear the songs from vineyards fair
Of happy youths so free from care ;
A little Parian marble maid
With lovely arms above her head,
Crowned with a wreath of fragrant flowers,
Smiles often on my weary hours.
And plants there are whose lovely grace
Would drive the care from any face :
A stately lily rears its crest,
With golden crown and snow-white breast ;
And close beside arbutus fair
Sway in the gentle summer air,
Lobelia of the deepest blue,
Geraniums of a snowy hue,
And many others here find place,
Of stately form or tender grace.
Oh, quaint and curious little room,
You boast no treasures of the loom,
You've nothing costly, rich or rare,
But unto me thou art most fair.

ELLA. *She is the*

Sitting by the window there,
Crowned with braids of nut-brown hair.
To look at, you are very fair—
Ella, my friend.

In the clear depths of your eyes,
Where purity embedded lies,
Tears unbidden often rise—
Ella, my friend.

Round your mouth and in your cheek
Dimples play at hide-and-seek,
Come and go, with careless freak—
Ella, my friend.

Around your throat the dainty lace
Clings lovingly in close embrace,
Content with its fair resting-place—
Ella, my friend.

I would that time on his tireless way
Would leave you as you are to-day,
Winsome and bright as the flowers in May—
Ella, my friend.

MY DAINTY LOVE.

I would have her tall and slender,
Eyes of wild-wood violet blue,
Dimpled mouth, both arch and tender,
And her cheeks of blush-rose hue.

I would have her young and fair,
Still looking forward to to-morrow,
Her white brow, unlined with care,
Free from every taint of sorrow.

I would have her move sedately,
With a Princess Royal grace ;
Yet she must not be so stately
As to show of pride a trace.

I would have in her completeness,
Lovely form and lovely mind,
All a spotless woman's sweetness,
Childish trust and faith combined.

Shall I know you when I meet you,
My fair love, of whom I write ?
Shall I as a stranger greet you,
My dainty love, so pure and white ?

MY FRIEND.

He must be like Sir Galahad,
Royal Arthur's stainless knight,
Shunning all that's vile and bad,
Striving ever for the right.

He must reverence every woman,
Lowly-born or beauty's queen ;
Scorns he age ? He is no true man,
No Sir Galahad, I ween.

Rough his hands may be, and work soiled,
For that I do not care a jot,
If for loved ones they have toiled
I'll honor every scar and spot.

Of graces he need have but few,
If to nothing mean he'll bend,
But honest, manly, tender, true,
Must be the one I call my friend.

A GAME OF CHESS.

I wooed my lady on a day
To join me in a game of chess ;
Over the board her hand did stray,
Charming me with its daintiness.

Her sturdy pawns she forward moved,
To guard her king and queen from harm ;
And as my foeman's steel I proved
I marked her round and dimpled arm.

Right onward then in haughty ire
The church's dignitaries came ;
Her eyes were lit with victory's fire
As eagerly she watched the game.

Swift leaping o'er the bishop's crests
The knights came spurring from afar,
A martial ardor filled their breasts,—
They knew it, theirs, to end the war.

Firmly her castle stood in place,
And my fierce onslaught calmly waited ;
But, ah, in looking at her face,
I lost my game and was checkmated.

MY LADY.

Did you see my lady pass to-night ?
Whispered the rose to the lily fair ;
On her lips there played a smile so bright,
And she wore my fairest bud in her hair.

Said the pine tree by the little white gate,
Dropping its leaves like evergreen rain,
Did you see my lady pass so late
Down the green path that leads to the lane ?

Did you see my lady pass this way ?
Said the sweet June grass to the clover ;
'Twas almost at the close of day,
Yet the bright sun shone above her.

I saw my lady pass to-night,
Whispered the robin, soft and low ;
I heard the fall of her footstep light,
But that was more than two hours ago.

What keeps my lady so long away
From her birds and favorite flowers ?
Why comes she not at close of day
To walk in the garden bowers ?

Down by the river my lady stands,
Gazing into the purple skies,
And somebody holds her white soft hands,
Looking lovingly into her eyes.

While somebody's arm is round her thrown
And somebody plays with her glossy hair,
My lady heeds not her robin's moan,
Nor the flowers' soft whispers in the air.

FRIENDSHIP.

'Tis a deep stream flowing onward ever,
Increasing, decreasing, failing, never ;
Shoals and rapids are in its course,
But from these the current gathers fresh force.
'Tis the interchange of purest thought,
Of treasures that cannot be sold or bought ;
Yes, the kindly glance when sorrow is near,
Or sympathy sweet when trouble we fear.

ANNA. *Luvage*

Anna—it is a lovely name,
One that might grace a royal dame,
And there is something in it, soft and fine,
Like a strain from Mendelssohn's songs divine;
It suits you well with your gracious air,
Your calm, clear eyes and nut-brown hair.
Gentle mother, friend, and wife,
Happy and cloudless be thy life;
May it be thine to soothe and cheer
All that are to thee most dear;
To thee and thine I pray be given
A happy home on earth, in heaven.

IN THE SHADOW OF GOD.

Not in this busy world, dear Lord,
Can tired hearts find a resting-place,
Not though they love Thy holy Word,
And long to look upon Thy face.
Many there are with hearts so faint
That they dread the heat of the noon-day sun,
And ever is heard their sorrowful plaint,
As they fall in their places one by one ;
And yet in Thy presence they long to stand,
Far from the world they fain would flee ;
Wilt Thou not take them by the hand,
And safe in Thy shadow let them be ?
In the shadow of God, all troubles past,
Or warded off by a Father's great love ;
E'en the weakest may hope to reach Thee at last,
And dwell near the beautiful Throne above.

CHRISTMAS, 1881.

The Autumn days grew cold and chill
And flitted like pale ghosts away ;
The naked maples on the hill
Were outlined 'gainst the sky so gray.
Through hapless boughs the sad wind sighed,
Making them bend and twist and sway,
And sobbed o'er hills and bleak plains wide
A requiem for each summer day.
Poor Mother Earth, in sombre dress,
Beneath the sky lay mute and faint ;
Longing for summer's sweet caress,
Yet utt'ring no loud word of plaint.
Old Winter saw her as she wept,
"Cheer up dear Mother Earth," said he,
And brought a mantle when she slept,
And wrapped her in it lovingly ;
Then sheeny, sparkling lace he hung
On every naked branch and bough,
Diamonds with lavish hands he flung
Upon her spotless breast and brow ;
Then with holly leaves he crowned her,
Decked her with its berries bright,
Garlands green he cast around her,
O'er her robes of bridal white.

Then the bells rang out so clearly
Through the frosty, wintery air,
Christmas comes to greet thee yearly,
Claims thee as his bride so fair.
Rang the bells so clear and loudly,
Peace, good-will, a joyous strain :
Christmas comes to greet thee proudly,
Comes to be thy King again.

ROSES IN SEPTEMBER.

(Our roses that disappointed us in June are blooming in September.—
Letter 27th September.)

Fresh and fair lay my garden-beds,
Bathed in the beams of the bright June sun,
Narcissus and daisies reared their heads,
Their petals unfolding one by one.

Fair lilies that dwell in shady dells,
Close folded in leaves of satin sheen,
Swing in the air their perfumed bells,
Shedding a fragrance sweet and clean.

And beauteous pansies, rich and rare,
Velvet robed like a proud brunette,
Encircled by sprays of maiden hair,
Mingled with fragrant mignonette.

Nemophilas lifted their clear bright eyes
Unstained by any earth-born hue,
Shadowing back to the summer skies
Their radiant heavenly blue.

But I looked in vain for my rose of June,
Queen of my garden fresh and fair,
Her buds hung lifeless and drooping at noon,—
Blight and canker were busy there.

Ah, me, I sighed, it is like my life,
Sweet buds came forth in the morning-tide,
And with music and sunshine the air was rife,
But before the noon they all had died.

* * * * *

Again in my garden beds I strayed,
In sweet September's balmy hours,
And, lo ! my rose tree stood in the shade
Laden with a wealth of flowers.

Over each delicate blossom I hung
Inhaling its odor subtle and rare,
And back and forth in the breeze they swing
Daintily beautiful, sweet and fair.

Ah, heart of mine no more remember
Thy rosebuds that died at noon,
They may come to thee in thy September
Fresh and fair as the flowers of June.

A CHILD AGAIN.

Backward turn, oh flying years,
Father Time stand still, I pray :
Farewell a while my woman's fears,
I would be a child to-day.

A little maid as once of yore,
Daily trudging to the school,
Learning hard lessons o'er and o'er,
And often breaking some strict rule ;

A romping, laughing wayward child
Uttering the thoughts warm from the heart,
No creature of the woods more wild—
Too truthful yet to act a part ;

Unsullied by a worldly stain,
And joyous as the birds of heaven,—
Her greatest wish but to obtain
A mother's smile for service given ;

Still looking forward with delight
To the vague land of womanhood,
Longing to turn its pages bright—
Resolved to keep them fair and good.

I cannot be a child again,
My heart has woman's loves and fears—
Then, Father Time, move on,— 'tis vain
To try to stop the rolling years.

Yet keep me still, oh God, I pray,
Gentle and loving as a child;
Give me Thy strength from day to day,
And make me holy, meek, and mild.

DEATH IS NEAR.

In a dark and shaded room,
Robbed of all its life and bloom,
Friends are passing to and fro,
And they say, in voices low,
Death is near.

Yes, 'tis nearer than you know :
In your midst that dreaded foe
Stretches out his awful hand,
Takes the dearest of your band
And departs.

Gather round the little bed,
Lift the young and girlish head,
Note the pallid lips apart,
Silent, too, the throbbing heart,—
She is gone !

Not so very grave or wise
Was this girl with laughing eyes,
Yet around our hearts she wove
Tenderest cords of warmest love,
Now snapped in twain.

Sadly the poor mother stands,
Touching tenderly the hands
Of her darling passed away,
And in her sad eyes no ray
Of comfort shines.

Lord, give me strength, she humbly says,
Almost rebelling while she prays ;
Ah, who can know the tender bond
That held the child and mother fond
In tenderest ties.

Lead her from the sight away,
Where the brightness of the day,
Mingling with the flowers perfume,
Will help to chase away the gloom
From her heart.

Robe the dead in purest white,
Place around her roses bright ;
Wipe the tear-drops from your eyes,
For, beyond the fair blue skies,
She lives again.

There where life fades not away
And purest joy will last for aye,
In the happy, heavenly land,
With the glorious angel band,
She lives again.

TIRED.

I'm tired and worn and weak to-night,
My heart is sad and full of fear,
Round me, I can see no light—
All is dark and chill and drear.

Not far off I hear the sound
Of a swift running river ;
Not yet have I its steep banks found,
But its rolling haunts me ever.

Oft in sleep by its banks I kneel,
And its waters rush to greet me,
And its cruel, cold embrace I feel,
As rising high they meet me.

And when I wake I know that dreams
Have flung their chains around me ;
But, even then, sometimes it seems
The cruel waters have found me.

Perhaps when to the river side
My weak and trembling footsteps come,
It will not seem so deep and wide,
For through it I must go home.

A WISH.

(Accompanying a present of fine lace.)

Stitch by stitch fine lace is wrought,
With patient care and anxious thought.
Sweet sister may your life, like lace,
Be fair and fine and full of grace ;
Sunshine gild your wintry hours,
And summer give thee fairest flowers.

A TOKEN.

Oh think not, child, that thou alone
Art burdened with a load of care,
Each heart in silence makes sad moan,—
Sorrow and sin are everywhere.

Oh sink not, child, beneath thy load,
Though in thy path fair hopes lie dead,
Though steep and lonely is the road
That in thy weakness thou must tread.

See, child, it has been trod before,—
Footsteps there are to show the way,
And, though the clouds above thee lower,
It leadeth thee to perfect day.

MARRED.

In thoughtful mood I held my pen,
 Before me lay the paper white :
 I longed for power thereon to write
Words that would touch the hearts of men.

My pen into the ink I dipped,
 Idly I held it o'er the sheet
 And pondered on my theme so sweet ;
But from its point a black blot slipped.

Before me lay a new-born year,
 The days unstained, all fair and bright ;
 And, as I viewed the lovely sight,
I vowed from sin to keep it pure.

'Twas but a thoughtless word indeed,
 Borne idly on the passing air ;
 But, oh, it soiled my year so fair,
And caused a wounded heart to bleed.

Must it be always thus, I sighed,
Must all my pages fair be marred,
And all my days with sin be scarred ;
“ Oh, help me change it, Lord ! ” I cried.

I know that I am very weak,
That oft-times far from Thee I stray ;
Oh, keep my feet within Thy way,
And help me still Thy grace to seek.

A HOME PICTURE.

(Christmas Eve, 1880.)

The wintry winds, in frolicsome glee,
Are rushing over lake, hill and sea ;
The pine trees are before them swaying ;
The cedars to each gust are saying :
" Blow, sturdy winds, blow care away,
Scatter the clouds before Christmas day."

Snowflakes are falling in each hollow,
Softly singing there's more to follow ;
Beech, birch and maple, bending low,
Underneath their cloak of snow,
Say : " blow ye winds, dispel all sadness,
Welcome Christmas day with gladness."

Round the fire the children gather,
What care they for wind and weather ?
Storms and sleet or wintry rain,
May beat against the window pane,
Without care or thought of sorrow,
" Christmas comes," sing they, " to-morrow."

Darkness falls upon the earth,
But flings no shadow on their mirth ;
Each one has their jokes to crack,
From baby joy to handsome Jack.
A cloud comes over the mother's face
As her eyes rest on the vacant place,
And her heart goes out to the one away,
And she longs to greet him Christmas day.

Lazily curled in the big arm chair,
Katrina sits, of the dusky hair ;
The fire-light falls on winsome Ella,
As she dreamily listens to the 'cella ;
Over the strings the father's hand strays,
Recalling memories of by-gone days,
"I'm wearin' awa'" he tenderly plays,
Then "Auld Lang Syne," and "Ye Banks and Braes."

Then, grasping his bow with firmer hand,
That strain that's been sung in many a land,
"Home, Sweet Home," soft, low, and clear,
Falls gently on the listener's ear.
Blue-eyed and brown-eyed, black and gray,
They laugh and chatter of Christmas day—
Mattie and Blanche and laughing Jim—
With not a ripple their joy to dim.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT.

(31st December, 1882.)

J ust and generous strive to be,
A s enters in young Eighty-three;
N othing cruel, false, or base,
U nderneath your words find place;
A nd try each day some good to do,
R emembering who has said to you :
" Y e must do this for love of Me,
And I will always dwell with thee."

(Written for THE EXAMINER.)

A Home Picture.

CHRISTMAS, EVE, 1892.

The wintry winds in frolicsome glee,
Are rushing over lake, hill and sea;
The pine trees are before them swaying
The cedars to each gust are saying,
"Blow sturdy winds, blow ours away,
Banish the clouds before Christmas day."

Snowflakes are falling in each hollow,
Nestling snug there's more to follow,
Birch, hick and maple bending low,
Underneath their cloak of snow,
Say, blow ye winds, dispel all sadness,
Welcome Christmas day with gladness.

Sound the fra, the children gather,
What care they for wind and weather!
Storm and sleet or wintry rain,
May beat against the window pane,
Without care or thought of sorrow,
Christmas comes, sing they, to-morrow.

Darkness falls upon the earth,
But flings no shadow on their mirth,
Each one has their jobs to crack;
From baby Joy to handsome Jack;
A cloud comes over the mother's face,
As her eyes rest on the vacant place,
The one that's gone but to the one away
And she longs to greet him Christmas day.

Father curled in the big arm chair,
Tossing bits of the dusky hair;
The fire light falls on winsome Ella
As she dreamily listens to the 'cella
Over the strings, the father's hand strays
Recalling memories of bye-gone days;
"I'm wearin' awa'," he tenderly plays,
Then "Auld Lang Syne" and "Ye Banks
and Brees."

Then grasping his bow with firmer hand,
That strain that's been sung in many a land
"Home, Sweet Home," soft, low and clear,
Falls gently on the listener's ear.
Blue eyed and brown eyed, black, and gray
They laugh and chatter of Christmas day
Mistle and Monarchs and laughing Jim,
With not a ripple their joy to dim.

KATHLEEN D. RAMAGE.